

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—James Freeman Clarke.

VOL. XXVIII.

OCTOBER, 1919

No. 5

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY, EXCEPT AUGUST: 50 cents a year.
Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as
second class mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

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THE WATCHER ON THE TOWER.

What dost thou see, lone watcher on the
tower?
Is the day breaking? Comes the wished-for
hour?
Tell us the signs, and stretch abroad thy hand,
If the bright morning dawns upon the land.

*The stars are clear above me; scarcely one
Has dimmed its rays in reverence to the sun;
But yet I see, on the horizon's verge,
Some fair, faint streaks, as if the light would
surge.*

Look forth again, O watcher on the tower!
The people wake and languish for the hour.
Long have they dwelt in darkness, and they
pine
For the full daylight that they know must
shine.

*I see the hilltops now, and chanticleer
Crows his prophetic carol on mine ear;
I see the distant woods and fields of corn,
And ocean gleaming in the light of morn.*

Again, again, O watcher on the tower!
We thirst for daylight, and we bide the hour,
Patient and longing. Tell us, shall it be
A bright, calm, glorious daylight for the free?

*I hope, but cannot tell; I hear a song
Vivid as day itself, and clear and strong
As of a lark,—young prophet of the noon,
Pouring in sunlight his seraphic tune.*

We thank thee, watcher on the lonely tower,
For all thou tellest. Sings he of an hour
When Error shall decay and Truth grow
strong,
When Right shall rule supreme and vanquish
Wrong?

*He sings of brotherhood and joy and peace;
Of days when jealousies and hate shall cease;
When war shall die, and man's progressive mind
Soar as unfettered as its God designed.*

Well done, thou watcher on the lonely tower!
Is the day breaking? Dawns the happy
hour?
We pine to see it. Tell us yet again
If the broad daylight breaks upon the plain.

*It breaks,—it comes,—the misty shadows fly,—
A rosy radiance gleams upon the sky;
The mountain-tops reflect it calm and clear.
The plain is yet in shade, . . . but day is near!*
—Charles Mackay.

A MERRY HEART.

"A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance."—
PROV. XV. 13.

The proverb-writers set much store upon
"a merry heart." Many of them had small
reason for cheerfulness. Yet they loved to
look upon the bright side of things, to recog-
nize that even severe sorrow had its com-
pensation. It was not their nature, like
many of the psalmists, to go about "as with
a sword in their bones." They were no
prophets of evil. They had a strong and
complete trust in God. Remember too that
most of them had no hope of heaven. They
looked to receive all their blessedness, all
their happiness, on earth. When earth's day
was passed they believed that they would
depart into the dull dark shadow-land of
Sheol, where they would be without feeling,
without perception, existing not living, dead
though in a certain unreal sense alive.
Hence they afford to us a much-needed ex-
ample of living joyously.

I sometimes think that our daily papers
do much to take cheerfulness out of life.

They are so filled with accounts of the seamy side of the day's events, that we are apt to exaggerate its extent and its horrors. They have hardly anything to say of the numberless kindnesses, of the many happy hours, of the wealth of brotherly love outpoured on most days of the week. When the outlook is gloomy, they never point to possible gleams of light. They make the worst of class-selfishness. In their desire to be interesting, they spice their wares with evil spice, and sauce their pages with narratives of wrong-doing. Our country is always going headlong to ruin, so these wisecracks assert. In spite of the failure of one prophecy of evil, they go on to make another; so that those who really believe what they say are kept in a continual state of anxiety about what may never happen, in fact seldom does happen. I do not say that this applies in full to all our daily papers, but it is the tendency with most of them.

Now it is very certain that a sad heart does not help us to bear trouble and pain. Nor is a continually sad heart grateful to God and to man. I am told it is "temperament" which rules such matters. "Temperament" is a blessed word used to cover many things, including a disagreeable temper. In the old times men laid all their sins upon the back of the devil. Now that science has taught them something, they invent a new devil and call it "temperament" to excuse lapses which they need not commit. I do not deny that temperament has much to do with our way of looking upon things. Yet surely it must be admitted that we have largely made our own temperament, or others have helped us to make it. To speak of temperament in a baby is to speak of what barely exists, or at best is only in the making. What is more, we can change our temperament to a large extent, if we will try to use our wills and our intelligence. "A merry heart" is not of necessity born with us. It can be cultivated, though much self-control is required in that task.

Of course the proverb-writer means "mirthful" by "merry,"—that is a habit of mind which makes the best of daily events, which tries to see the best in each of them, which looks upon them with a kindly humor that keeps clear from all excess. Those who cannot see the humorous side of daily happenings are heavily handicapped. One of the great foes of "a merry heart" is the cultivation of a suspicious temper. If we are always suspecting others of a settled design to take advantage of us, we can never be free from anxiety. Some people call this suspicious habit of mind "worldly wisdom." It is in

fact the supreme example of worldly folly. If I am to be foolish, I would rather be subject to unworldly than to worldly folly. The first at least keeps me comparatively free from anxiety, while the second keeps me at a continual boiling-point of anxiety. It is best after all to think well of, to expect well from, those round about us. We may be deceived sometimes; but we shall be spared much needless anxiety and unhappiness.

Blessed are those who can laugh heartily. Honest laughter is the cure of many physical ailments, of many a heartache too. I say "honest laughter," which is not the sneering assertion of fancied superiority, but the off-spring of a wholesome thankful view of life. Happiest are those who can laugh at a jest against themselves. That is one of the surest proofs of the possession of that "merry heart which maketh a cheerful countenance." It is wise to try to look out upon the world with loving eyes. That is the only way, I feel sure, to see it as it is. Many a one who is really sound at heart presents a rugged outside, which can deceive the eyes of all but love. Hence we disturb ourselves and people of this kind in vain very often, because we do not take them as they are, but as we quite wrongly imagine them to be. A loving heart pierces beneath that rugged outside. What is more, a loving heart is usually a merry heart.

If you want a sure example of this greater truth, look at little children. They have their times of wilfulness and pettishness, no doubt. Yet their hearts are loving and mirthful, too. They can judge the real character of one who may appear hard to others, and their judgment in this respect is rarely at fault. Their loving trust is a sure guide to them; they know who loves them and cling about him. They are mirthful because they are loving, not simply because they are young. They have not learned the evil habit of suspicion, which is too apt to creep on with the advance of years. If we can avoid acquiring that habit, we shall be able to keep the child's heart fresh and sweet to the end. It is late perhaps for some of us to change habits acquired by long years of practice. It is late; but it is not hopeless. I have known men and women to change completely when they have long passed middle age. The change has cost them a struggle, no doubt. Still the worth of "a merry heart" is so great, that the hardest struggle to obtain it cannot be thought too hard to make.

When we are about some serious occupation, "a merry heart" is of sovereign aid. It bears us over so many difficulties with :

snatch of song, a quiet laugh, a cheerful outlook on the future. Such a heart is never beaten by adverse circumstances; no, not by physical pain itself. It has made many a strong soul in a weakly body. It has smiled away difficulties which would have daunted a melancholy spirit. It looks to the sunshine, stores the sunshine for future shadow, realizes that shadow and rain are just the effects of the sun, which is shining even where it cannot be seen. It is not a frivolous heart captivated by the mere bubbles of the stream of time. While it values little things, it sets them in their right place. So it is fitted to bear great burdens, to rejoice in great joys, when the one or the other falls to its portion.

If we choose to look upon life as a vale of tears, we shall see it as such, and help to make it so to others. But that course never helps either ourselves or others—that is certain. Better is it to be dumb than always complaining; better to be blind if we refuse to look to the light. Yes, cheerfulness can be cultivated. It is a fire whose ruddy glow can warm all hearts, which can thaw the frost of despair, and make life a season of peace and for the most part bright.

These days of ours are anxious and troubled, no doubt. Yet this country has seen anxious and troubled days before. The troubles and anxieties are on a gigantic scale perhaps. Still we only add to both by moaning about them. Nor can we mend them in this way. "A merry heart" can help us and all around us to face the gloom and to dispel it in due time. It is the sure source of dauntless courage—and it is courage, not croaking, that is needed most now. Never think for a moment that the clouds will last forever. Keep a light aglow in your own hearts until the darkness is past. Remember that every street has a sunny side, that it is well to choose the sunny side, as far as may be. In spite of late frost and snow, spring is always coming.

Nature seems to throb with "a merry heart" at each advance of spring. Can we not learn Nature's lesson? The spring of a new world is coming slowly to put an end to the winter of the old. Frosts and storms may and will come before the full radiance of the season is with us; but it is on its way. Nothing can finally hinder its advance. God is our Father, we are His children. He never forsakes us, though we forsake Him. His Spirit is brooding over the tossing waters of life, breathing into the souls of men the inspiration of progress. Our way is in the deep, but our Father is with us. May we then meet the future with a merry heart and a cheerful countenance, and the

clouds will give way to sunshine and the future be better than the past.—*Rev. Arthur W. Fox, in The Christian Life.*

A SIGN OF THE TIMES.

If the Watcher on the Tower were questioned again, he would hail, as one of the wonderful signs of the opening new era, such news as this, which comes to America by Associated Press despatches from Rome:—

"Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy, has decided to surrender all the crown properties in favor of the peasants and for national work for former soldiers. Premier Nitti makes this announcement.

"The crown properties of Italy are larger than those of any other country, since the House of Savoy inherited the properties of the rulers of the eleven states of which Italy consisted before the kingdom became one united whole.

"During the war the King gave over his splendid royal palace at Caserta for the use of his soldiers. His intention now is that the vast lands which he possesses, virtually in every region of Italy, shall go to the peasants who fought in the war, while his palaces, castles, and other buildings shall be utilized for philanthropic purposes.

"In addition, the King has expressed a desire that his private patrimony be taxed like that of any other citizen. Thus, the King's civil list, amounting to about \$3,000,000 yearly, will be done away with or greatly diminished, as the monarch used it almost entirely to administer the crown properties for charitable purposes."

These acts are in perfect keeping with the unselfishness and hearty public spirit which had previously marked the life of this deservedly respected monarch. King Victor Emmanuel and the whole royal family have repeatedly shown the right spirit of brotherhood with the people, and have demonstrated such a spirit in helpful work. Their idea of royalty (if one may judge by their acts) is that it implies service rather than privilege.

THE STILL HOUR.

Father, in Thy mysterious Presence kneeling,
Fain would our souls feel all Thy kindling
love;
For we are weak, and need some deep revealing
Of trust and strength and calmness from
above.

Lord, we have wandered forth through doubt
and sorrow,
And Thou hast made each step an onward
one;
And we will ever trust each unknown mor-
row,—

Thou wilt sustain us till its work is done.

In the heart's depths a peace serene and holy
Abides; and when pain seems to have its
will,

Or we despair, oh, may that peace rise slowly,
Stronger than agony, and we be still!

Now, Father, now, in Thy dear Presence
kneeling,

Our spirits yearn to feel Thy kindling love:
Now make us strong; we need Thy deep re-
vealing

Of trust and strength and calmness from
above.

—Samuel Johnson.

Do not live, day by day, trying to repent
but fearing the struggle and the suffering.
Deferred repentance in generous natures is
a greater pain than would be the sorrow of
real repentance. Manly regret for wrong
never weakens, but always strengthens the
heart. As some plants of the bitterest root
have the whitest and sweetest blossoms, so
the bitterest wrong has the sweetest repent-
ance,—which is, indeed, only the soul blos-
soming back to its better nature.—H. W.
Beecher.

It singeth low in every heart,

We hear it each and all,—

A song of those who answer not,

However we may call;

They throng the silence of the breast,

We see them as of yore,—

The kind, the brave, the true, the sweet,

Who walk with us no more.

'Tis hard to take the burden up

When these have laid it down;

They brightened all the joy of life,

They softened every frown;

But oh, 'tis good to think of them

When we are tempted sore!

Thanks be to God that such have been,

Although they are no more!

More homelike seems the vast Unknown

Since they have entered there;

To follow them were not so hard,

Wherever they may fare.

They cannot be where God is not,

On any sea or shore;

While'er betides, Thy love abides,

Our God, forevermore!

—John W. Chadwick.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

*Send all offers and requests for this department to
Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.,
tel. Quincy 1140.*

Please remember, when you see a request for a
book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols,
asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?"
before sending it, else the person who requests it may
receive several copies. When any one writes directly
to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card
to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When
you receive more requests than you can meet, send
these to the Book Club to be printed here.

NOTICE.

Please take notice that all letters for the
Book Club *must be written in ink, and on one
side, only, of the paper.*

Change of Address: Mrs. B. J. Hall is now
at Ashland, West Virginia.

OFFERS.

The Brighton Branch Alliance offers the
following books (apply to Mrs. Sarah L.
Downes, 83 Sutherland Road, Brighton,
Mass.):—

Juvenile.

"Melody" and "Captain January," Laura
E. Richards; "Little Lord Fauntleroy" and
"Editha's Burglar," Burnett; "Little Million-
aire," Moody; "Mrs. Muff and Her
Friends," Etheridge; "Five Little Peppers,"
"Five Little Peppers Midway," and "Five
Little Peppers Grown Up," Sidney; "Betty
Leicester's Christmas," Jewett; "The Birds'
Christmas Carol" and "Story of Patsy,"
K. D. Wiggin; "Child's Recollections of
Tennyson," Ellison; "Little Men," "Eight
Cousins," and "Jack and Jill," L. M.
Alcott; "Seven Little Sisters," Andrews;
"Kenneth and Hugh," Bell.

Fiction.

"Zoroaster," "Roman Singer," "Dr.
Claudius," "To Leeward," "Tale of a
Lonely Parish," "An American Politician,"
"Marzio's Crucifix," and "The Three Fates,"
Crawford; "The Celebrity," Winston
Churchill; "Wee Macgregor," J. J. Bell;
"Caleb West—Master Diver" and "Tom
Grogan," F. Hopkinson Smith; "Things
Will Take a Turn," Harraden; "Eben Hol-
den," Bacheller; "John Varholm's Heir,"
Armes; "Beecherroft," "Dynevor Terrace,"
"Dove in the Eagle's Nest," "Queen of the
County," "Heir of Redelyffe," "Young
Stepmother," "Daisy Chain," and "The
Trial," Yonge; "Teddy" and "The Squire's
Daughter," Marshall; "Guardian Angel,"

O. W. Holmes; "Conquest of Canaan," Tarkington; "The Dawn at Shanty Bay," R. E. Knowles; "The Three Brides," Yonge.

Miscellaneous.

"La France Littéraire," edited by Herrig and Burgny; Le Nouveau Testament; "L'Abbé Constantin," Halévy; Holy Bible; "Daily Food for Christians"; Anthon's "Classical Dictionary"; Kingsley's "Social Choir," Vol. I.

For the following books apply to Mrs. Harriet T. Boyd, 17 Marsh Street, Dedham, Mass.: Life of William Ellery Channing (one volume), Channing's Works (one volume), Longfellow's Poems, Tennyson's Poems, Bryant's Poems, Pope's Poems, Goldsmith's Poetical Works, Coleridge, Charles Kingsley, "Hymns of the Ages," Goethe's Poems.

REQUESTS.

1. Miss Rose Watts, Boomer, North Carolina, will be glad of magazines and books. Her aunt, Mrs. Sophronia Watson, of Boomer, sends thanks for past favors and asks that books and magazines suitable for herself and children be continued.

2. I have received some cards from the Cheerful Letter friends, which I appreciated very much; and I should also appreciate an album and cards and good reading. My birthday will be the eighth of February; I hope the Cheerful Letter friends will think of me then. As I get lonesome I certainly would appreciate the things I have asked for. Miss Bessie Smith, Campbell, North Carolina.

3. I should be very glad to get some reading,—books, papers, or anything of the kind. I have four children,—two boys and two girls. Mrs. Nannie Wigington, Shuff, Virginia, Route 2.

4. I joined the Cheerful Letter Club a year ago and have received much help and comfort from its members. I thank all who have remembered me in any way. I should like any kind of good reading,—a Life of Jesus, also good song-books, and any kind of magazines. I should appreciate scraps for patchwork and bits of ribbon for fancy work. I enjoy *The Cheerful Letter* very much. Mrs. Clarence Bradley, Sandidges, Virginia, Route 2, Box 33.

5. It has been so long since I have received anything from the Cheerful Letter friends that I would now ask for a few books. I

thank every one who has remembered me by sending me letters, reading matter, or patchwork pieces, and I should still be glad to be remembered in the future. If any one has sheets of music that she is through with, I should be glad to have some. I haven't taken many lessons, but I think some sheets of easy music will be a great help to me. I shall appreciate anything that is sent. Miss Bessie D. Bradley, Sandidges, Virginia, Box 33, R. F. D. 2.

6. We wish to thank our Cheerful Letter friends for books, magazines, and other things sent us during the past months. It has been a great help to us. We should still appreciate reading matter of any kind. Will some one please send us a Life of Lincoln and one of Gen. Francis Marion, or anything written on the war between the States? J. R. Weaver, Lansing, North Carolina, Box 3.

7. Miss Lizzie Emerson, Dodson, Virginia, will be glad of picture-papers and a song-book. She is fourteen years of age.

8. I met a lady a few days ago who told us about *The Cheerful Letter* paper and gave us the address. She said that if we would write to you, probably you would help us in some way. We two are sisters. Our father is a farmer and our poverty-stricken condition makes us very unhappy. Our mother has been sick quite a while, and this leaves us all the housework to do besides helping with the outdoor work. This, you see, makes it hard on us. Another privilege we do not have is the reading of good literature. We do not have a book to read, nor a magazine in our home. Werida Hall, Woolwine, Virginia.

9. Mrs. Sarah Smith, Ferrum, Virginia, Route 3, the mother of nine children, asks for pictures and light reading.

10. I am writing to you for some good reading. We have lived in the dry West and lost all we had, and had to come here to work for wages. I have a husband and five children and have to keep the oldest one out of school to work. Their ages are: a boy, seventeen; a girl, fourteen; a boy, nine; a girl, five; and the baby girl three. I get lonesome and sad in a town like this, for I can't fix to go to church. I should like to go. I should be glad to get some good reading for the children and I should especially like a Bible, for I try to live a Christian life. Mrs. M. C. Cathran, 2721 Howell Street, Dallas, Texas.

11. Will you Cheerful Letter friends please send some good books to my niece, who is sixteen years old? She is the oldest of six motherless children, is her father's homemaker, and cares for the little ones, too. The children are fond of reading, and anything suitable for the younger ones (all boys except two) will be gladly received. The Cheerful Letter friends have been so nice to me that I want them to brighten the lives of our dear ones, too. Please address any good books or magazines that can be sent, to Miss Frances Billingsley, Fredericksburg, Virginia. I thank you in advance for any favors shown these children, and also for your kindness to me. Jennie Billingsley, Lignum, Virginia.

12. I wish to thank everybody for their kindness in sending me books and literature; and I shall appreciate anything that may be sent me in the future. S. W. James, Warrsville, Ashe County, North Carolina.

13. As I haven't received any reading for some time I will write again. I should be glad of good reading for the children, and especially glad of a Bible with large print for my husband. Should also appreciate scraps of any kind for my quilts. I have moved to the coal fields and among strangers. I should be so glad to hear from the Cheerful Letter friends. Mrs. B. J. Hall, Ashland, West Virginia.

14. Mrs. Rose Shaver, a young mother of Wadesboro, North Carolina, Route 1, Box 49, will enjoy magazines or story-books.

15. Mrs. Mary J. Huneycutt, Wadesboro, North Carolina, asks for reading for a nineteen-year-old daughter, who has been a cripple all her life.

16. Mrs. Anna B. Reynolds, Rupert, Arkansas, will be grateful for good reading for herself, as she cannot get away from home often.

17. I have not written to *The Cheerful Letter* for a good while. I wish now to thank again the many friends who have so kindly remembered me during the past year. I live in the country and think it is a good place to live, though I get very lonely sometimes and like to be remembered by my friends. I should again appreciate any good books and magazines, also scraps for patchwork. Best wishes to the paper and its readers. Grace M. Gilbert, Sandidges, Virginia, Box 34.

18. Miss Mabel C. Cortelyou, Marietta, Georgia, would be glad to receive for the

Franklin Free Library in that town "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," any volumes of the "Little Colonel" series, and any of Louisa Alcott's stories for young people. The Library has owned the juvenile books named, but the volumes have become too shabby to be lent any more.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

FEEDING OUR FAMILIES WELL.

The war has taught us much about food values. Every woman to-day knows that each different food that we eat has different qualities, and that we can make our bodies just what we wish by skilfully combining the right foods.

All foods fall into one of the following classes:—

1. **PROTEIN.** These foods make muscle:—
White of eggs,
Meat,
Milk,
Nuts,
Fish,
Grains like wheat, oatmeal, etc.,
Beans and peas, especially dried.
2. **STARCHES.** These foods make energy and give fat to the body:—
Rice,
Potatoes,
Macaroni,
Bananas,
White bread,
Any form of cornstarch, tapioca, etc.
3. **FATS.** These give heat and energy to the body:—
Fats from meat and fish,
Olive, peanut, or other vegetable oils,
Fats like butter and lard.
4. **SUGARS.** These create heat:—
Cane sugar and beet sugar,
Honey,
Sugar in milk, and in many vegetables and fruits.
5. **MINERAL SALTS.** These are needed to clean the body and keep the blood pure:—
Salts and acids from all fruits and vegetables like tomatoes, peaches, berries, melons, apples, grapes, etc.
6. **BULK FOODS.** These help elimination and empty the intestines*:—
Cabbage,
Spinach,
Celery,
Lettuce,
All green and coarse vegetables with fibre and seeds.

*By sweeping out the passages.

A "balanced" meal has one of each of these groups of foods. That is, at each meal we should choose a food which has proteins, another that has starch, another that has sugar and fat, and another that has mineral and bulk. Planning a meal is like a game. We can think of each food as a block or part of a puzzle and need only to put the right ones together to form a perfect whole.

Now age makes a great deal of difference in the kind of food we should eat. If we have a grandmother or old person in the home, she should not use too many fats or starches, but should confine her meals largely to fruit, lean meat, and dry forms of bread which will be the least indigestible.

The active adult, on the other hand, needs a large quantity of starch and bulk, as well as protein to enable him to do his work. The amount of fat needed will depend on the season. We need less fat in warm weather or if we do mental work than we do in cold weather, or if we do outside work like gardening, driving, etc.

Another kind of person is the one who sits at a desk or does most of his work with his head and not with his muscles. The point here is to remember that the diet must be light and especially planned with an eye to avoiding constipation. The person who takes little exercise needs a quantity of fruits, vegetables, salads, and lighter foods. He cannot stand heavy puddings, rich sauces, or any kind of food that "stuffs him up."

Growing children are doing two things. They are building their actual body tissue and also using up a great amount of energy in play and school work. A boy of ten will require as much food as a man of thirty-five doing desk work. The point is to furnish the child sufficient food of a kind to "hold him," so that he will not need to eat such a quantity. Peanut-butter, beans, cream cheese, lentils, milk, and eggs are all excellent. The child also needs a large quantity of fruits and vegetables, in order to keep his system pure while growing.

Girls and women need more vegetables and solid foods than they usually take. Girls should avoid the over-sweet foods, the pastries and desserts which make digestion difficult.

Women have "cooked" for centuries, but the home-maker is just beginning to learn how to feed her family. The careful stockman weighs every ounce of the exact kind of food he gives to his prize hogs or cattle. But the home-maker wrongly thinks of *cooking* where she should first and always think of *feeding*. If we want prize people, then we must take as much pains to feed them as we

do to feed prize cattle. The mother who knows that she can get all the right food into one or two dishes will not need to spend hours cooking an elaborate meal. The housekeeper who knows that peanut-butter or milk at a few cents a pound will give her as much value as expensive steak at half a dollar will be able to feed her family for less money. The more a woman knows about feeding, the easier will become her cooking, and the greater will become the health of her family, while her pocketbook will stay much fatter.—*Christine Frederick, in the Boston Herald.*

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

THE KEEPING OF THE BRIDGE.

This story of a Roman twenty-five hundred years ago came down to us through old traditions. Though Rome was then hardly more than a village, and fighting was done with spears and daggers, human nature was the same as now.

Janiculum was the name of a height outside the ancient town of Rome, where guards were stationed to prevent enemies from crossing a bridge over the Tiber River and so entering the town. The poet tells how advancing enemies had taken possession of that outpost, and were fast approaching. Then he goes on to say of the Roman leaders:—

They held a council, standing
Before the River Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly,—
"The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
Naught else can save the town."

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear;—
"To arms! To arms! Sir Consul,
Lars Porsena is here!"
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy cloud of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate;—
"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late;
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods?"

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may.
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.

In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now,—who will stand on either hand
And keep the bridge with me?"

Then out spake Spurius Lartius,—
A Ramnian proud was he,—
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius,—
Of Tatian blood was he,—
"I will abide on thy left side
And keep the bridge with thee."

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou say'st, so let it be."
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans, in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold
Nor son nor wife nor limb nor life
In the brave days of old.

Meanwhile, the axe and lever
Have manfully been plied,
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!"
Loud cried the Fathers all,
"Back, Lartius! Back, Herminius!
Back ere the ruins fall!"

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back;
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But, when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more;

But, with a crash like thunder,
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream.
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind,—
Thrice thirty thousand foes before
And the broad flood behind.
"Down with him!" cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
"Now yield thee to our grace!"

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see.
Naught spake he to Lars Porsena,—
To Sextus naught spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome:—

"O Tiber, Father Tiber,—
To whom the Romans pray,—
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms
Take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and, speaking, sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And, with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank.
And when, above the surges,
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain;
And fast his blood was flowing,
And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armor,
And spent with changing blows;
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus;
Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
We should have sacked the town!"
"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
"And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before!"

And now he feels the bottom . . .
Now on dry earth he stands.
Now round him throng the Fathers
To press his gory hands.
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

—T. B. Macaulay.

NATURAL HISTORY.

"FIRST AID" FOR BIRDS IN TROUBLE.

We all know how "district nurses" go about in parts of our large cities or in country districts, to give help, first in one household and then in another. A writer in *Canada* tells about work of much the same sort done for birds on a large tract near Toronto, where the wild creatures are being encouraged to multiply. He says:—

"The Reservation embraces about twenty-five acres, including both high and dry woodland and low, wet marshes, which make it attractive to a great variety of birds. Although many birds had successfully reared their broods on those twenty-five acres, there were quite a number that met with difficul-

ies. The ground was carefully watched by two families residing on the grounds. One nest which I watched was that of our most popular native bird, the American robin. A pair had built a nest over the door of Mr. H.'s house. Without any one's noticing it, the eggs disappeared and the nest was partially destroyed; the pair were not discouraged, but remodelled their home, and four more eggs were laid. Four young robins later made their appearance and were thriving, when, one day, a black squirrel, which had always been encouraged around the house, turned criminal and proceeded to attack the nest. Mr. H. noticed the confusion and found the intruder in the act of throwing out the little naked birds. The squirrel had dropped one to the ground and was holding another in his mouth. He was frightened away and the little birds were replaced in the nest. They did not seem to be injured; after a few more days they were fully feathered and started out to learn the art of extracting earth-worms from the lawn.

"The next family circle needing help was that of a pair of blue birds which had nested in a bird-box. The mother bird had been killed, leaving five little ones, almost fully fledged. Mrs. H. reared the family upon egg-and-milk custard,—a most unusual diet for birds! The youngsters did well, and were soon able to feed themselves. Then they were given their liberty; and it is hoped they will all come back next year.

"One day I started out, armed with my field-glasses and note-book; I was asked to locate a song-sparrow's nest, which was somewhere in the vicinity of a thistle-patch that Mr. H. intended to clear out. A few of the thistles had been cut already, but operations had been suspended because of the serious objections of the parent birds. I took my post near by, partly concealed by tall grasses and weeds. Both the male and the female came down, time after time, with their mouths full of small moths and other insects, devouring the food themselves after much chirping and moving about. I took this to be bird strategy, and waited for three hours; then it dawned upon me that the birds themselves did not know just where that nest was. I thought that the cutting of part of the thistle growth had made them lose their sense of direction. But as I investigated I found that the nest had in some way been upset and overturned on the ground. I scratched away the leaves and grass, and there were three little ones, still alive. My problem was, what to do with the young birds, since the nest was partially

destroyed and the thistles which once sheltered it were gone. I decided, rather than move the nest to a new place, I would move protecting material to the nest; so I dug up tufts of sod and transplanted them around the old location; then I replaced the little birds in the righted nest, and it was only a moment before the parents were feeding the young just as if nothing had happened. The young birds were soon fully feathered.

"Another family of song-sparrows had an exciting time when they were intruded upon by an otherwise friendly dog. The little ones, being fully fledged, left the nest when the dog's sniff sounded too close; the movement of course attracted the dog, and she caught one of them. I was hurrying to the scene as fast as I could; my shouts caused the dog to drop the bird, and upon examination I found an abdominal wound large enough to allow the bowel to protrude. I took the sparrow home, sewed up the wound with a fine silk thread and washed it with disinfectant. The next day the little fellow was quite active, but refused to take food; I believe it was because he was so old; very young birds almost unconsciously open their mouths to be fed. After several attempts to feed him various kinds of insects, I decided to take him back to his mother. This I did, and she began feeding him at once. When I last located him, he seemed perfectly healthy.—*L. L. Snyder, in "Bird Lore."*

"EXCEPT YE BECOME"—

Nancy Burroughs sat in her pastor's study and faced him with earnest eyes.

"You preached a wonderful sermon last Sunday, Dr. Parsons," she burst out, "and you set a very wonderful ideal before us: to live here and now as if it were in the kingdom of heaven. But it is simply impossible—for me, at least. Some girls, leading a sheltered life at home, may be able to do it, but not a business girl like me.

"All day long there's nothing but the hurry and bustle and hard work of the office. At home it's worry about the cost of the children's shoes and the rise in food prices. And there's more work at home, for I help with the housework and the sewing in my spare time. Sounds like the kingdom of heaven, doesn't it?" Nancy's tone was almost bitter.

"I know some poor girls to whom it would sound like heaven," said Dr. Parsons gently. "Regular work in an excellent office, a good home to live in, with a loving mother and father and little brothers and sisters to love—even to worry over sometimes. But I want to

tell you a story, Nancy, one that a friend of mine told me recently.

"My friend is a nose-and-throat specialist, and one day a little girl was brought to his clinic for a small operation on her nose. For some reason he could not give the little thing any anæsthetic; so he took a fifty-cent piece out of his pocket and put it into her hand.

"That's for you to spend exactly as you like as soon as this is over," he said cheerily. 'I'm going to hurt you a little, I'm afraid, but if you'll take a very good look at the fifty cents before I begin, and then hold it tight in your hand and keep thinking of what you saw all the time while I'm at work, it won't hurt nearly so much.'

"The child went through the operation unusually well, and the doctor congratulated himself on his bright idea.

"You're a very brave little girl," he said, patting her on the head, 'and pretty soon you can go out and spend your money. Tell me all the things you thought of while I was at work.'

"I thought of the words," said the little girl.

"The words?" repeated the doctor. "The date, you mean?" It was so long since he'd really noticed a coin that he hardly remembered that they had any words on them.

"Why, no! Those are numbers. I mean the words at the top, 'In God We Trust,'" said the little girl quite simply. 'It was the first half dollar I ever had, so I never saw them before, but it's lovely to have them there. So the folks that have half dollars can always think about that.'

Dr. Parsons paused, and for a moment or two there was silence. Then Nancy spoke abruptly.

"And I," she said, "have had half dollars all my life, and never thought about it once! The kingdom of heaven must be like beauty, 'in the eye of the beholder.' Is that what you mean?"

"Exactly—only I was thinking of some older words still:

"Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'

"The kingdom of heaven really means your Father's kingdom, doesn't it, Nancy? But to see it as your Father's kingdom, your Father's world, you must have the loving, trustful eyes of your Father's child."—*The Youth's Companion*.

AN EXCITING RIDE.

"One of the most exciting times I ever had, for a few minutes at least," said Uncle Charles, "was when I was a young fellow and went up to the city to work.

"After some trouble I got a job as driver on a watering-cart,—a sprinkler, you know,—and let me tell you that a watering-cart is no rival of the automobile when it comes to either speed, rubber tires, or luxuriously upholstered seats. The city made a point of buying broken-down nags for the watering-carts, so my span would hardly have won a blue ribbon when I got them; but they showed that they had seen better days, and I got pretty fond of them. Fed them and treated them well, too, and in time they began to show the effects. However, I didn't dream that I was training them for a race.

"One warm day they were ambling along as usual, heads down, jog, jog, over the rough pavements, when suddenly a fire-alarm rang. We happened to be near a fire-house, and it wasn't two minutes before I heard a great clanging of gongs, and the fire-engine dashed by, with the firemen buttoning their coats. I barely had time to pull farther to one side.

"At least I thought that that was what I was doing, but I soon found out my mistake. At the very first sound of the gong my jogging old horses threw up their heads and pricked up their ears, and when the engine went by we dashed right off at a mad gallop just behind it,—they used horses then,—barely avoiding a collision with the hose-cart which was just behind.

"The men on the hose-cart yelled, and banged on their gong even louder than before, but the only effect seemed to be to drive my horses perfectly frantic. I couldn't do a thing with them, and as I sawed on the lines, we zigzagged back and forth across the street, which was a rather narrow one, so that nothing in the world could get by. We must have looked funny, too, for I hadn't had the sense to turn off the water, and there we were careering along in the front rank of the fire company and watering the high spots as we went. Do you wonder that the people on the sidewalks roared with laughter as they pointed us out to each other?"

"Fortunately the fire wasn't very far away, and when we got there the horses stopped short, with the cart more or less on the bias, and doing its best to block up the whole street. But I was sore enough and tired enough from my bouncing ride to be glad to stop even though the fire chief came up the next minute and stated his opinion of me in no uncertain tones. And everybody who wasn't angry was laughing at us both.

"The fire was a false alarm, so everything was over before the horses and I really got out of breath. And then one of the firemen came up and looked the horses over and called them by name. And they knew him!

"It turned out, of course, that they had been old fire-horses, and a crack team in their day,—and the sequel of the story is a fine one. The firemen were so pleased with their memory and their spirit that they made up a purse and bought them back from the city, and they retired to a peaceful old age on a farm somewhere near. I have often wondered, though, if they unexpectedly took that farmer to any fires in his village!"—*Winifred Arnold, in The Christian Register.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 238 Willow Ave., West Somerville, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

HIDDEN TREES.

1. As pencils are cheap, you may buy a dozen.
2. All people who continually rash may expect to be humiliated in the end.
3. Before looking at the map, Lena adjusted her spectacles.
4. It is certain that many planets beside our own are inhabited.
5. As an example, see how the bee cheerfully performs its labors day by day.
6. "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."
7. One of the most exquisite of precious stones is the opal, marvellously reflecting fiery rays from its little furnace.
8. The Armada tested its massive elegance against the doughty British in vain.
9. The satrap, pleased with the young Greek's answer, gave him a free pardon.
10. The man was uncertain whether the picture represented a troop of evil spirits or angelic hosts.—*Harper's Young People.*

II.

ANAGRAMS.

- A famous American—
 "Go on sewing the rag."
 An American man of letters—
 "Come join me for the spree."
 Man of world-wide fame—
 "Help succor him or bust."
 A famous explorer—
 "No master then, only R.Y."
 An American man of letters—
 "He shall jot a bird lingo."

III.

CHARADE.

My first, though only half, is yet the same
 as middle;
 My second's always "good" and "she,"
 though why's a riddle;
 My third is always "he" and sometimes
 very bad;
 My whole, though often small, is elegantly
 clad:
 The smallest of its kind, it's something
 very breezy;
 And, when you find it out, you'll say, "I
 know, it's easy."

—*St. Nicholas.*

IV.

A POULTRY PROBLEM.

I bought some fowl the other day,
 One hundred dollars did I pay:
 Each turkey did 5.00 dollars touch,
 Each goose did bring but half as much;
 While chickens, if it must be told,
 For ten cents each were freely sold.
 One hundred fowls in all had I,
 Of each how many did I buy?

—*St. Nicholas.*

V.

CHARADE.

Found long ago, yet made to-day,
 I'm most employed while others sleep,—
 What none would like to give away,
 Yet no one likes to keep.

VI.

EASY TRANSPOSITIONS.

In each of the following sentences the word which is to fill the first blank is to be such that its letters may be rearranged to form a word that will fill the second blank and make sense.

1. You can not cross the — in a —.
2. In spite of his — leg, he was as firm as a —.
3. After saying a few —, his enemy handed him a —.
4. We found the doors of all the — and cottages —.
5. The owner of the — house had a large collection of — antiquities.
6. The man who was playing the — uttered a — as he lifted it upon his shoulder.
7. The — was obliged to — the book.

—*St. Nicholas.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

Chairman of the Cheerful Letter Exchange,
Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way,
Quincy, Mass. The next meeting will be
October 3, 1919.

Secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange,
Mrs. Francis Hastings, Kendal Green, Mass.

Editor of The Cheerful Letter, Miss L.
Freeman Clarke, 5 Brimmer Street, Boston,
Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols,
25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of *The Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

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